

Historic Vegetation--Fall '97 Update

A pilot project proposal for the Missouri Historic Vegetation Project was presented to the MoRAP steering committee on January 23, 1997. This project utilizes the U.S. General Land Office (GLO) survey notes from the early 1800's. Phase I, database redesign and normalization, is complete. The steering committee awarded \$16,660 to complete Phase II of the project and the committee officially declared the Historic Vegetation initiative as a MoRAP project. This will allow extension of existing coverage into the lower Ozarks and into four other pilot areas to be completed by August. These five areas represent a variety of Missouri habitats and provide the needed information to estimate the time and expenses required to extend the database to the entire state. The database includes not only survey trees, but also other environmental information, and thus is a more complete coverage of the field notes. Thus it will have more uses than GIS databases developed in other states from GLO survey data. The user interface for the input of data has been progressing well and is almost complete. Data technicians will be hired by the end of March. A preliminary vegetation map of the Shannon County area has been produced using data from a previous research project (Michael Batek for The Nature Conservancy). This map contains eight associations developed by the Historic Vegetation Team based on dominant species, density, average diameter at breast height, Land Type Association lines, geology, and a variety of other characteristics. The percentage of the association for the dominant species in an association was calculated (see example table). Preliminary percentages of species appear to correspond well with the designated associations. For more information contact Walter Schroeder at (573) 882-8265.